

Petitioner Greta Cobar, an individual residing in Venice, California and served by the Venice, California Main Post Office (the "VMPO") hereby petitions the Postal Regulatory Commission, pursuant to 39 C.F.R. § 3001.111, for review of the September 23, 2011, decision by the United States Postal Service ("USPS") to close the historic structure presently housing the VMPO at 1601 Main Street (hereinafter the "Closure Decision"), made by way of the Final Decision Regarding Relocation of Retail Services in Venice, California dated September 23, 2011, and signed by David E. Williams, Vice President of Network Operations for the USPS.

The petition is made on the ground that the Closure Decision improperly describes the closure as a "relocation" of a customer service facility to another existing building, namely, the Venice Carrier Annex at 313 Grand Boulevard, when in fact it would result in the elimination of a large retail post office with five customer windows and the establishment in its place of a much smaller retail operation with no more than two customer windows, ancillary to the Venice Carrier Annex. This dramatic decrease in the size of the VMPO simultaneous with its purported "relocation" means that in fact, the action is the functional equivalent of a closure – or at least a partial closure – of the VMPO. Thus, the decision should be, and is, subject to all procedures and considerations associated with a closure under 39 U.S.C. § 404(b) and 39 C.F.R. § 241.3, including an appeal to this Commission. Petitioner therefore requests that the Commission reverse the Closure Decision and return the matter to the Postal Service for further consideration. In addition, based upon the foregoing facts Petitioner applies pursuant to 39 C.F.R. § 3001.114 for an order suspending the effectiveness of the Closure Decision pending the outcome of this appeal.

Other issues with closing the VMPO involve preservation of the 1939 Works Projects Administration building and the 1942 Edward Biberman mural. Two other Biberman murals that were removed from the downtown post office and court house were never to be found again when Biberman himself searched for them in the mid 1980s. In addition, the mural has to be available for public viewing, which would be difficult to ensure once the building is sold.

In addition, the residential area surrounding the annex, the proposed new location of the post office, cannot accommodate the increased traffic that moving the post office would create. Currently all parking spots at the annex are occupied either with post office vehicles or employee parking. There are no spots available for post office customers, and no plans to create such spots. Moving all customer traffic and parking to the strictly residential area would affect the residents' quality of life and would have a negative environmental impact. No environmental or traffic studies have been conducted to evaluate the possible effects on the residents.

According to several postal employees, the annex is currently extremely crowded with the sorting operations, and there is no space available to accommodate the postal service operations. Although \$400,000 has been allocated for remodeling of the annex, such a consolidation will result in crowded conditions that will not meet the standards of the community.

The community served by the VMPO is united and outspoken against the closure of the post office, which is a community landmark. The community supports moving the Venice sorting operations from the annex to the VMPO and sending the Marina del Rey and Playa del Rey sorting to their neighborhoods. The annex could then be sold for at least \$16 million, which

is more than triple the amount the VMPO is currently on the market for. Because of the strong demands of the community for the preservation of the VMPO historic building as well as the public's access to the Biberman mural, the sale of the annex would be a much easier sale than that of the VMPO building.

I look forward to working with postal office representatives to find a solution that accommodates the Venice community and allows us to continue supporting the USPS.

Sincerely,

Greta Cobar

October 21, 2011